

SENATE BILL No. 238

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED BILL

Citations Affected: IC 20-12-22.2.

Synopsis: Teacher recruitment and retention. Establishes a teacher recruitment and retention grant program, administered by the state student assistance commission, to attract qualified teachers to those geographical areas of the state where a critical shortage of teachers exists and to retain qualified teachers in teacher shortage areas by providing scholarships to persons working toward a master's degree in education or an educational specialist degree.

Effective: July 1, 2002.

Rogers

January 7, 2002, read first time and referred to Committee on Education.

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Second Regular Session 112th General Assembly (2002)

PRINTING CODE. Amendments: Whenever an existing statute (or a section of the Indiana Constitution) is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type, additions will appear in **this style type**, and deletions will appear in ~~this style type~~.

Additions: Whenever a new statutory provision is being enacted (or a new constitutional provision adopted), the text of the new provision will appear in **this style type**. Also, the word **NEW** will appear in that style type in the introductory clause of each SECTION that adds a new provision to the Indiana Code or the Indiana Constitution.

Conflict reconciliation: Text in a statute in *this style type* or ~~this style type~~ reconciles conflicts between statutes enacted by the 2001 General Assembly.

SENATE BILL No. 238

A BILL FOR AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning education.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

1 SECTION 1. IC 20-12-22.2 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
2 AS A **NEW** CHAPTER TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
3 JULY 1, 2002]:

4 **Chapter 22.2. Teacher Recruitment and Retention Grant**
5 **Program**

6 **Sec. 1.** As used in this chapter, "approved institution of higher
7 learning" has the meaning set forth in IC 20-12-21-3.

8 **Sec. 2.** As used in this chapter, "commission" refers to the state
9 student assistance commission established by IC 20-12-21-4.

10 **Sec. 3.** As used in this chapter, "fund" refers to the teacher
11 recruitment and retention grant fund established by section 6 of
12 this chapter.

13 **Sec. 4.** As used in this chapter, "program" refers to the teacher
14 recruitment and retention grant program established by section 5
15 of this chapter.

16 **Sec. 5. (a)** The teacher recruitment and retention grant program
17 is established. The commission shall administer the program.



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(b) The purpose of the program is to attract additional qualified teachers to those geographical areas of the state where a critical shortage of teachers exists and to retain the qualified teachers already serving as licensed teachers in teacher shortage areas by making scholarships available to persons working toward a master's degree in education or an educational specialist degree at an approved institution of higher learning.

Sec. 6. (a) The teacher recruitment and retention grant fund is established to make awards authorized under this chapter to eligible applicants.

(b) The fund consists of the following:

(1) Appropriations made by the general assembly.

(2) Gifts, grants, devises, or bequests made to the state in order to achieve the purposes of the fund.

(c) The fund shall be administered by the commission. The expenses of administering the fund shall be paid from money in the fund.

(d) The fund shall be separate and distinct from other funds administered by the commission, and money in the fund may not be exchanged with or transferred to other funds.

(e) The treasurer of state shall invest the money in the fund not currently needed to meet the obligations of the fund in the same manner as other public funds are invested. Interest that accrues from those investments shall be deposited in the fund.

(f) Money in the fund at the end of a state fiscal year does not revert to the state general fund.

Sec. 7. (a) An approved institution of higher learning in Indiana that offers a master's degree in education or an educational specialist degree may apply to the commission for participation in the program.

(b) As part of the program, participating institutions shall collaborate with the commission to identify, recruit, and place teacher education graduates from both within and outside the state in school districts located in areas of Indiana where a critical shortage of teachers exists, as determined by the commission.

Sec. 8. (a) The commission shall provide grants from the fund to participating institutions of higher learning to award scholarships to qualified persons pursuing a master's degree in education or an educational specialist degree at the institutions while rendering service as a licensed teacher in a school district in a geographical area of Indiana where a critical shortage of teachers exists.

(b) A scholarship awarded under this chapter shall be applied



to the total cost of tuition, books, materials, and fees at the institution in which the student is enrolled, not to exceed an amount equal to the highest total cost of tuition, books, materials, and fees assessed by a state institution of higher learning during that school year. A teacher who relocates to Indiana from another state in order to participate in the program shall be classified as a resident of Indiana for tuition purposes.

(c) To qualify for a scholarship under this chapter, a person must:

- (1) be admitted to an approved institution of higher learning as a full-time or part-time student pursuing a master's degree in education or an educational specialist degree;
- (2) agree, in writing, to the employment requirements under section 13 of this chapter; and
- (3) meet any criteria established by the commission.

Sec. 9. (a) Persons awarded scholarships under the grant program established by this chapter may receive the scholarships for not more than four (4) school years. However, the maximum number of scholarships that may be made to a student may not exceed the length of time required to complete the number of academic hours necessary to obtain a master's degree in education or an educational specialist degree.

(b) Scholarships under the grant program may not be based upon an applicant's eligibility for financial aid.

Sec. 10. In addition to a scholarship awarded under this chapter, an eligible person relocating to a geographical area of Indiana where a critical shortage of teachers exists, as determined by the commission, to participate in the grant program under this chapter is eligible for reimbursement from the fund for the person's moving expenses to the critical teacher shortage area. The commission shall adopt rules necessary for the administration of the relocation expense reimbursement component of the grant program under this chapter.

Sec. 11. The commission may use money in the fund for professional development and support services as may be necessary for the retention of teachers participating in the program in those geographical areas of the state where a critical shortage of teachers exists.

Sec. 12. A person participating in the program who fails to complete a program of study that will enable that person to obtain a master's degree in education or educational specialist degree is liable to the commission for the sum of all awards made to that



1 person under the program, plus interest accruing at the current
 2 federal unsubsidized Stafford loan rate at the time the person
 3 abrogates the person's participation in the program.

4 **Sec. 13. (a)** As a condition for participation in the program, a
 5 teacher shall agree to employment as a licensed teacher in a school
 6 district located in a geographical area of Indiana where a critical
 7 shortage of teachers exists for a period of at least three (3) years,
 8 which must include those years of service rendered while obtaining
 9 the master's degree in education or educational specialist degree.

10 **(b)** Service rendered by a participant as a licensed teacher in a
 11 school district in a geographical critical teacher shortage area
 12 before that teacher becomes a participant in the program may not
 13 be considered to have fulfilled the employment commitment
 14 required under this section.

15 **(c)** A person failing to comply with the employment commitment
 16 in any required school year is in breach of contract and becomes
 17 liable immediately to the commission for the sum of all
 18 scholarships awarded and relocation expenses granted to that
 19 person, less one-third (1/3) of the amount of that sum for each year
 20 that service was rendered, plus interest accruing at the current
 21 federal unsubsidized Stafford loan rate at the time the breach
 22 occurs. However, the commission may defer any repayments
 23 required by this section for the person's failure to comply with the
 24 employment commitment if there is no employment position
 25 immediately available upon the teacher's obtaining the master's
 26 degree in education or educational specialist degree. After the
 27 period of the deferral, the person shall begin or resume the
 28 required teaching duties or shall become liable to the board under
 29 this subsection.

30 **Sec. 14. (a)** The commission shall maintain complete and
 31 accurate records in implementing the grant program, including the
 32 following:

33 (1) The number and amount of scholarships awarded under
 34 this chapter.

35 (2) The number of persons completing a master's degree in
 36 education or an educational specialist degree under the
 37 program.

38 (3) The number of individuals who fulfill the employment
 39 requirements under this chapter.

40 **(b)** Each participating institution shall provide the commission
 41 with information concerning the following:

42 (1) The awarding of scholarships under this chapter.



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1 (2) The academic progress made by each recipient of a
2 scholarship under this chapter.

3 (3) Other pertinent information requested by the commission.

4 Sec. 15. The commission may permit an approved institution of
5 higher learning to act as its agent in accepting applications from,
6 determining eligibility for, and making awards to eligible
7 applicants of the approved institution of higher learning. The
8 institution of higher learning shall provide to the commission on a
9 timely basis any information, reports, and accounting the
10 commission requires.

11 Sec. 16. The commission shall adopt rules under IC 4-22-2
12 necessary to carry out this chapter.

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